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# THE TOMB OF MAYA AND MERYT: PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE SAQQARA EXCAVATIONS, 1990–1

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JACOBUS VAN DIJK, RUTGER PERIZONIUS *and* EUGEN STROUHAL

This report outlines the results obtained by the joint EES-Leiden Expedition in the tomb of Maya at Saqqara during the 1990 and 1991 seasons. A series of intrusive shafts associated with the main tomb were excavated, and much contexted funerary material and skeletal remains were found. Inscriptions provide evidence of interments dating to the Ramesside Period, the Late Period, and the early Ptolemaic era. Work was advanced on pottery, skeletal remains, and objects deriving from these and previous seasons. Full-scale drawings of reliefs and texts from the substructure of Maya's tomb, with the exception of Room H, were completed for publication. An epigraphic record was also made of Old Kingdom blocks found re-used in the masonry of the tomb, as well as reliefs and fragments from the decoration of the tomb of Horemheb and the Tias, retrieved from subsidiary shafts inside and outside the Maya complex. The mud-brick architecture of Maya's tomb was extensively restored, and preparations were made for the re-erection of the lintels over the pylon entrance.

THE 1990 season lasted from 11 January to 14 March. The EES staff consisted of Professor G. T. Martin, Dr D. A. Aston, Dr B. G. Aston, Dr J. van Dijk, and Miss E. Cladakis. Miss J. Dinsmore (British Museum) joined the expedition for part of the season to advise on matters of conservation. Leiden was represented by Professor H. D. Schneider, Dr W. R. K. Perizonius, Mr P.-J. Bomhof, Miss A. de Kemp and Mr M. Marée. The excavation and study season in 1991 lasted from 3 January to 18 March. The EES was represented by Professor Martin, Mr K. J. Frazer, Dr B. G. Aston, and Dr E. Strouhal. Dr D. A. Aston was with the expedition for two weeks to assist in the recording of the pottery. The Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, was represented by Professor Schneider. Mr Fawzy Abd el-Halim Omar and Mr Khaled Abdallah Daoud (Egyptian Antiquities Organization) worked with the joint expedition during both seasons.

## The excavations, seasons 1990–1 (H. D. Schneider)

After the clearance of the burial chambers of Maya and Meryt in 1988, the excavation of a number of subsidiary tomb shafts, discovered during earlier seasons in the superstructure,<sup>1</sup> and the completion of the investigation of the tomb of Ramose,<sup>2</sup> had still to be carried out. Both projects were brought to a conclusion in the seasons 1990 and 1991.

### *The subsidiary shafts*

Not unlike the majority of tombs excavated so far in the Memphite New Kingdom necropolis, the tomb of Maya and Meryt contains a number of shaft complexes which were constructed and used in periods not contemporary with those distinguished tomb-

<sup>1</sup> Martin, *JEA* 74 (1988), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Martin, *JEA* 73 (1987), 6; Raven, *JEA* 74, 3.

owners. The upper parts of some of these shafts had been cut into the thicknesses of the mud-brick walls of chapels A and B as well as in those of the outer court. Others had been dug out directly in the gravel and soft limestone (*tafl*) strata under the pavement of both the outer court and the forecourt. Thirteen shaft complexes, numbered iii–xv,<sup>3</sup> were excavated and investigated (see plan in fig. 1). Shaft complexes iii and iv had to be abandoned due to the insecure condition of the gravel stratum and the *tafl*-rock below the mud-brick chapel walls. The excavation of shaft complexes v and viii was completed in the 1991 season.

From the architectural features and layout, as well as the (thoroughly plundered) contents, two type-groups of shaft complexes can be distinguished. Group A comprises shaft complexes iii, iv, vii, x, xii, xiii and xv. Each of these consists of a shaft 4 m deep at the maximum, which gives access to two or three burial chambers. These shaft complexes date from the New Kingdom. Group B consists of complexes formed by a shaft 7–9 m deep, leading to a single chamber with four or five niche-chambers cut into the sides. The architectural features point to an Old Kingdom date, the contents to re-use in the Late Period. This group comprises shaft complexes v, vi (shaft only), viii, ix, xi and xiv.

#### *Shaft complexes of group A*

Shaft complex iii is cut into the wall thickness between chapel B and the inner court of the main tomb. Its excavation had to be abandoned, as noted above. The shaft is 1.50 m deep, its rim measuring  $1.35 \times 1$  m. The sides are plastered with a thin layer of mud. There is one chamber in the bedrock running south-west under the pavement of the inner court and under the west wall of chapel B. Apart from fragments of a wooden coffin and cartonnage, the upper parts of faience and much weathered alabaster shabtis, as well as sherds of a blue frit bowl, all of New Kingdom date, the sand fill also contained traces of Late Period use, witnessed by a faience shabti fragment inscribed for a certain Djed-djehuty-iuf (*sic*), son of Mer-neith. The skeletal remains of at least four individuals, including one non-adult, could be distinguished. The complex can be dated to the Ramesside Period but was clearly re-used in the Late Period.

Shaft complex iv is cut through the north wall of chapel B and gives access to two small rooms on the east and west, *c.* 1.20 m under the pavement of the chapel and cut into the stratum of gravel and bedrock. The clearance of these too had to be abandoned. A great quantity of linen mummy bandages, fragments of limestone relief and a few skeletal remains were found in the sand and rubble fill of the shaft. The complex can be dated to the Ramesside Period. It was possibly re-used during the Late Period.

Shaft complex vii is situated in the outer court. The rim of the shaft (pl. II, 1) measures  $1.77 \times 1.50$  m and consists of three courses of limestone blocks, three of which are inscribed. The latter are part of the architrave blocks of the portico in Maya's outer court. The depth of the shaft is 3.80 m, its base measures  $1.60 \times 0.90$  m. There are two rooms. Room A in the north could not be investigated due to a collapse of the ceiling caused by the weight of the north wall of the outer court. Remains of a wooden coffin and fragments of reed matting, all presumably of the late New Kingdom, were found at the entrance. Room B (width 2.35 m, depth 2.30 m, height 1 m) in the south is very roughly cut in the bedrock and its contents were severely plundered. In the fill of almost clean sand, several large fragments of a terracotta slipper coffin and the remains of a wooden coffin were found. Other finds bear witness to the reasonably high quality of the original funerary equipment: beads and pendants of faience and glass, all parts of a colourful *usekh*-collar, fragments of blue glazed shabtis, the lower part of a limestone shabti with black painted inscription for the mistress of the house Mehy, as well as a white ware potsherd with a hieratic docket giving

<sup>3</sup> The numbering was given in former seasons. No. i is the main shaft of the tomb of Maya and Meryt giving access to the burial chambers of the owners. No. ii is the fragmentary lowest course of blocks of a dwelling or shelter of late date, and is not in reality a shaft.

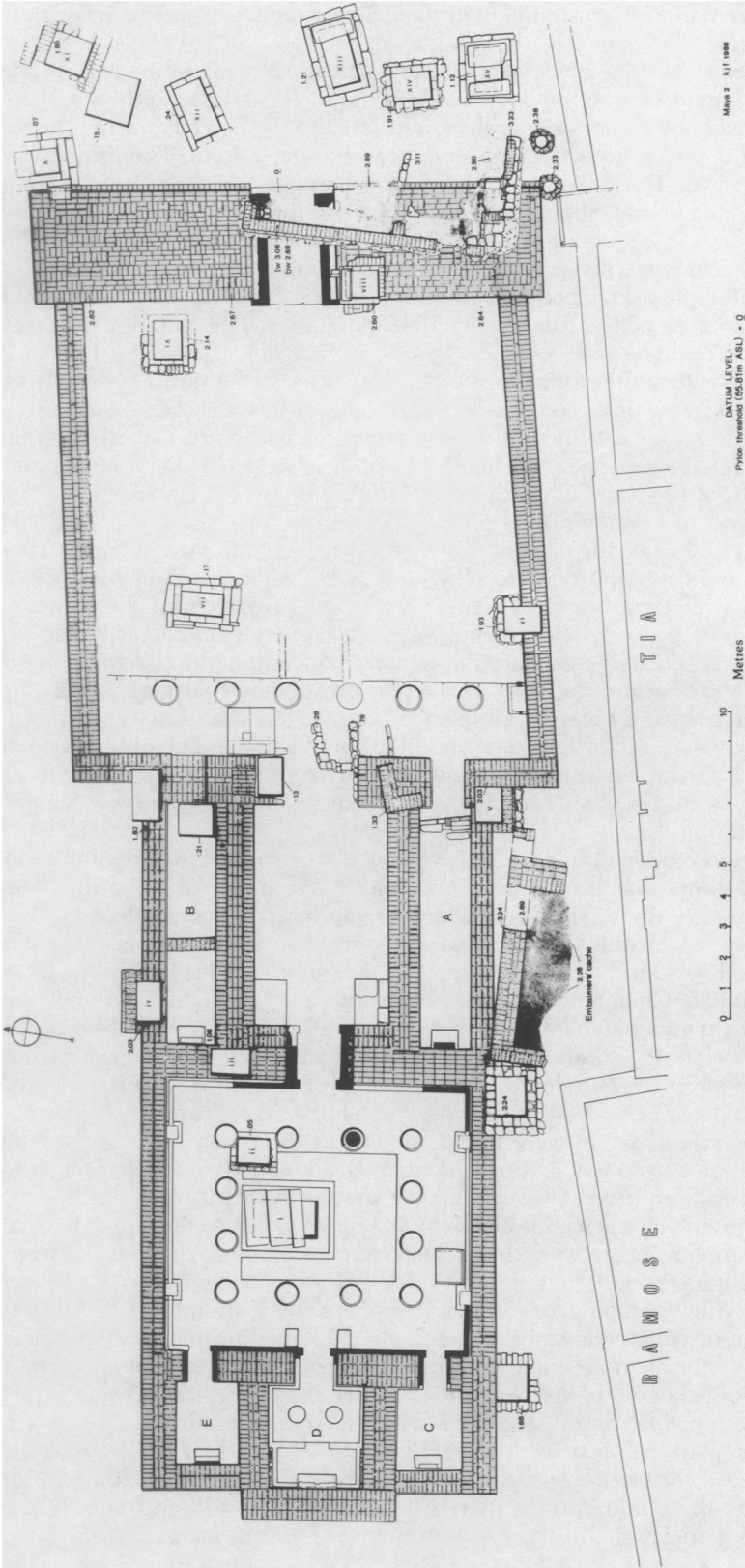


FIG. 1. Tomb of Maya and Meryt. Plan showing subsidiary shaft complexes.

the number 20. The remains of four individuals have been found, one of which is a non-adult. Both architecture and contents date from the Ramesside Period.

Shaft complex x lies east of the north-east corner of the north wing of the pylon. The shaft has a revetment of seven courses of smoothly dressed limestone blocks to a depth of 1.85 m. One of the blocks on the south side of the shaft is inscribed, and must have been taken from the tomb of Maya and Meryt. The total depth of the shaft from mouth to base is 2.80 m. The dimensions at bottom level are 1.45 m  $\times$  0.75 m. There are two chambers: chamber A on the north side of the shaft (width 2.05 m, depth 3 m, height 0.85 m) and chamber B on the south (width 1.75 m, depth 2.15 m, height 0.85 m). They are both roughly dressed and contain remnants of thoroughly disturbed burials of Ramesside date: the skeletal remains of five individuals, including two non-adults, a fragment of a small blue-glazed faience stela and a sherd of a fine alabaster vessel. There were also objects of Late Period date, such as fragments of faience shabtis. The complex had been re-used as a dwelling during the Coptic Period.

Shaft complex xii is situated east of the south-east corner of the north wing of the pylon. The sides of the shaft are lined with three courses of finely dressed limestone blocks. From mouth to base the shaft measures 3.85 m. At the bottom level its dimensions are 1.95 m  $\times$  1.20 m. There are two chambers: chamber A (width 1.45 m, depth 3.10 m, height 0.70 m) is in the east, its floor being 1 m above the bottom of the shaft. Chamber B is in the west (width 2.50 m, depth 3.20 m, height 1.60 m). The south and west walls of this chamber have one niche-chamber each. The floors of these niches are c. 0.90 m above the floor of chamber B. Both chambers and niches are roughly cut. Chamber A has a robbers' breakthrough to shaft complex x, whereas the niche in the south wall of chamber B is linked with chamber C of shaft complex xiii. Apart from the niches, which were empty, complex xii contained many fragments of an elaborately painted cartonnage coffin of late New Kingdom date. These fragments were particularly concentrated in chamber B, together with the remains of reed matting and dark brown leaves, presumably parts of a mummy wreath. In addition to the upper part of a blue-glazed faience Late Period shabti of very fine quality, and a fragmentary faience cup of similar date, the sand fill of both shaft and chambers contained a mass of skeletal material. A preliminary analysis shows that sixteen individuals at least, including three non-adults, were buried in this shaft complex, which can be dated to the New Kingdom with re-use in the Late Period.

The shaft leading to complex xiii, east of the north-east corner of the south wing of the pylon, has four courses of limestone blocks lining its sides. Its depth is 3 m, the floor measures 1.95 m  $\times$  0.95 m. There are three chambers, which are all directly accessible from the shaft. Parts of the rock mass between chamber A in the east (width 2 m, depth 2.20 m, height 0.80 m) and chamber B in the north (width 2.05 m, depth 2.35 m, height c. 0.80 m) had been cut away, so that both chambers are linked. Chamber C in the west (width 1.95 m, depth 3.10 m, height c. 0.80 m) has a breakthrough to the niche-chamber in the south wall of chamber C of shaft complex xii, c. 0.90 m above floor level. In the south-east corner there is a breakthrough to shaft complex xiv. All chambers have been severely plundered. The remains of the burial contents contain material which predominantly dates from the Late Period. In chamber A a dozen faience amulet-statuettes and shabtis of crude craftsmanship were found, as well as the remains of reed matting, basketry and small fragments of a wooden coffin. Chamber B contained much broken and dislocated skeletal remains and a large piece of mummified material. A small fragment of white bleached papyrus with bold demotic characters in black ink may give a clue to the late date of the last interments in this shaft complex. There were the skeletal remains of approximately thirteen individuals, including eight non-adults.

Shaft complex xv (fig. 2) comprises three chambers. The mouth of the shaft consists of limestone blocks, one of which shows relief work of Old Kingdom date and another of the New Kingdom. The sides of the shaft are lined with nine courses of limestone blocks. The depth of the shaft is 3.80 m, the dimensions of its base are 1.20 m  $\times$  0.65 m. Chamber A in the east (width 1.80 m, depth 2.35 m, height 0.65 m), chamber B in the south (width 1 m, depth 1.10 m, height 0.80 m) and chamber C in the west (width 2.40 m, depth 2.65 m, height 1.15 m) are roughly cut. Chamber B contained a fill of almost clean sand, whereas chamber C yielded a number of fine objects overlooked by the plunderers. Scattered throughout the sand and *tafl*-fill of chambers A and C there were four intact shabtis (h. 13.6 cm) and a fragment of a fifth specimen of a man

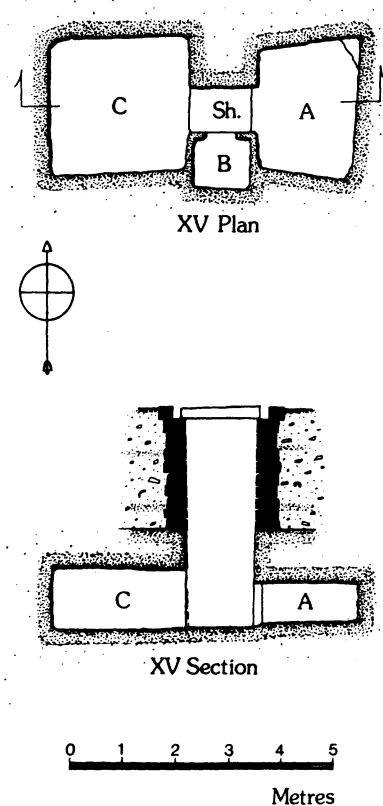


FIG. 2. Plan and section of shaft complex xv (Ramesside Period).

named Inenay, two complete (h. 14 cm) and two fragmentary statuettes of a man called Neferabu (partly written in hieratic) and one of a *wab*-priest Huy (h. 14 cm), all of bright blue-glazed faience and dating from the Ramesside Period (pl. III, 1-3). Other finds of note are a fine red glass *tyet*-amulet inscribed with the name of a man Meruseger, two green-glazed steatite scarabs with New Kingdom designs, some tiny fragments of a Book of the Dead papyrus, possibly with the name of the same Inenay mentioned above, an ornamental piece of wood in the shape of a bouquet of lotus flowers, a feather-shaped object of wood, and, last but not least, a white ware wine amphora, practically intact, with a hieratic docket mentioning a year 40 (see below). Fragments of a fine black glass amphoriskos with grey and blue wavy band decorations were scattered in the sand fill of chamber A. In chambers A and C much skeletal material was found, together with reed stalks, wooden logs with holes and many fragments of linen mummy bandages. The remains of at least twenty-two individuals, including seven non-adults, could be distinguished. Both architecture and contents date from the New Kingdom.

#### *Shaft complexes of group B*

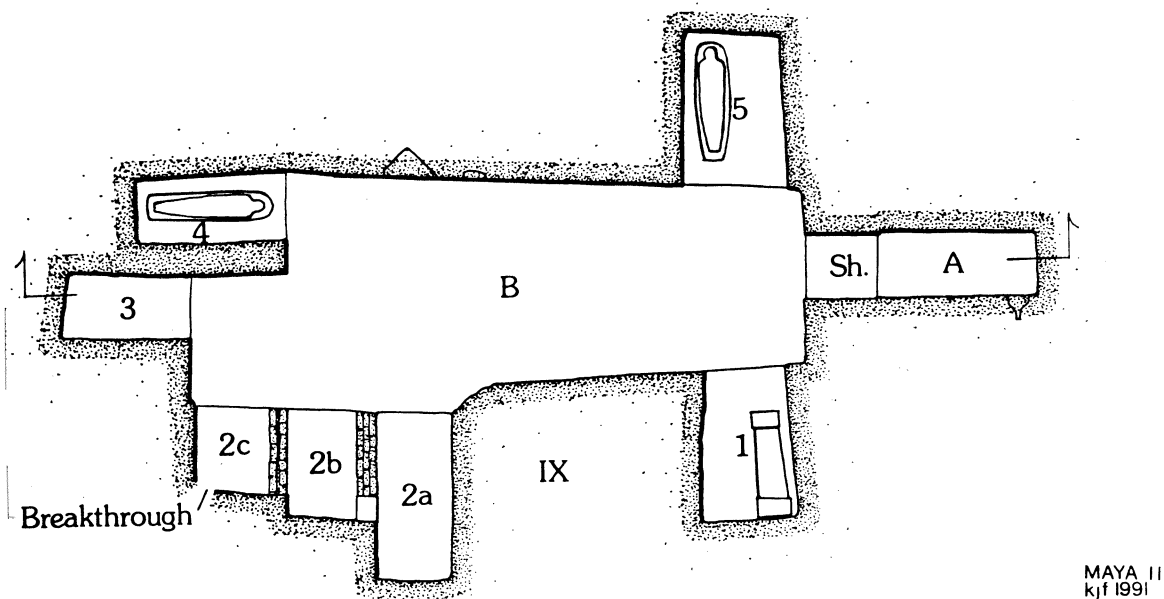
Shaft complex v in the thickness of the south wall of chapel A has a depth of 9.10 m. The rim measures 1.10 × 0.95 m. The shaft gives access to one large chamber in the east (width 4.70 m, depth 3.05 m, height 1.80 m). There are three niche-chambers, two in the south wall, one in the north wall. In the north-west corner of the room a robbers' breakthrough leads to a labyrinth of rooms and passages which all seem to belong to the subterranean parts of several Old Kingdom mastabas situated under the superstructures of both the tomb of Maya and Meryt and the tomb of the Tias. Two relief blocks from the tomb of Horemheb were discovered in the sand fill of the shaft, one of which shows a finely carved and painted head of the general adorned with the uraeus.

This relief appears to be part of the limestone relief decoration on the south wall of the offering-chapel of Horemheb. The burial chamber itself was filled with a 0.80 m layer of *tafl* containing a small number of objects, all dating from the Late Period. The fill in the robbers' passage contained sherds of fine stone vessels and an intact limestone dummy vase, all from the Old Kingdom. The complex is in fact the substructure of an Old Kingdom mastaba, its contents pointing to re-use exclusively during the Late Period.

Shaft complex ix (fig. 3) is situated in the north-east corner of the outer court of Maya and Meryt. The shaft is 6.75 m deep, its mouth measuring  $1 \times 1$  m. There are two chambers. Chamber A (width 0.90 m, depth 2.20 m, height 0.90 m) is on the east. The entrance is 0.90 m above the floor level of the shaft. Chamber B to the west is of irregular shape and very roughly cut. The entrance wall is 2.50 m wide, the width of the south wall is 8.50 m, that of the west wall 3.25 m, and of the north wall 7.25 m. There are two niche-chambers in the south wall, one of which is subdivided by two mud-brick walls into three compartments. The west wall has two niches and the north wall one. In three of the niche-chambers sarcophagus-shaped loculi are cut in the floor. Several of the covering slabs of these loculi were still in place. The structure of both shaft and chambers seems to be of Old Kingdom date, whereas the mud-brick walls in the niche-chamber were added in the Late Period. Chamber A was found to be empty. Fragments of Old Kingdom alabaster, limestone and breccia vessels were scattered over the floor of chamber B under a fill of sand and *tafl*. Chamber B and its adjoining niche-chambers still contained a large number of objects of Late Period date, apart from two relief slabs from the tomb of the Tias, which may have been used for blocking the niches or for covering the sarcophagus loculi (pl. II, 2). The chamber was filled with almost clean sand on top of a 0.50–0.75 m layer of *tafl*. In the fill were numerous skeletal remains. Two bodies were *in situ* on the floor. The burials of thirty-six individuals, including eleven non-adults, could be attested. The mummified body of a woman was found in the sarcophagus loculus in the niche-chamber in the north wall. Several hundred faience beads, parts of a bead net, lay scattered over the legs. Conspicuous for the burials in the main chamber were numerous faience statuettes of Toueris and Shu, some of which are of fine quality. At least ten Bes-vases and several fine quality Late Period pots could be reconstructed. Hundreds of blue-green glazed faience shabtis of a late type, many of which are inscribed with the name of Hetep-bastet, son of Mer-sekhmet (max. h. 8.4 cm), were found dispersed all over and within the *tafl* fill (pl. III, 5). Several torches of coarse red ware were found lying along the chamber walls. One of these is inscribed with bold black-painted hieroglyphs, giving the name of a certain Wahibre.

Shaft complex xi. The top part of the shaft is cut into the thick layer of *tafl* which covered this part of the terrain—east of the pylon—during the Late Period. The shaft is 7.20 m deep. The dimensions of the rim are  $1.35 \times 1.10$  m. There is one chamber to the south (width 2.75 m, depth 4.75 m, height 1.65 m). Each of the long sides has two niche-chambers (width *c.* 1.50 m, depth *c.* 2 m, height *c.* 0.85 m), some 0.75 m above the floor of the chamber. All niche-chamber walls as well as the south wall of the main chamber have small lamp niches. The fill of the main chamber consisted of a layer of clean sand *c.* 0.75 m thick, deposited on top of a layer of *tafl* *c.* 0.50 m deep. Skeletal material was abundant. Several bodies, one of which was mummified, were found *in situ*. Hundreds of crude pale green-glazed faience shabtis (height *c.* 8 cm), some of which are inscribed with the *shd Wsir* formula without mentioning the name of the shabti owner, as well as a few faience amulet-statuettes of Toueris and Shu, were found with the skeletons. Other finds in the *tafl* fill are the lid of a canopic jar of yellow limestone in the shape of Duamutef, a fine slate double feather-amulet, and a set of three rectangular miniature tablets in alabaster. The complex itself dates from the Old Kingdom. The burials all date from the Late Period.

Shaft complex xiv. As regards plan and finish, this complex is identical with complex xi. The lip of the shaft ( $1 \times 1$  m) is built of limestone blocks. The depth of the shaft is 6.60 m. There is one room to the north (width 3 m, depth 4.65 m, height 1.40 m). Each side has two niche-chambers (width *c.* 1.25 m, depth *c.* 2.25 m, height *c.* 0.85 m), some 0.90 m above the floor of the main chamber. Both shaft and room were filled with sand, mixed with chippings of limestone. Only a few potsherds and fragments of skeletons were recovered. Two poorly mummified bodies were found *in situ* on the floor. Several blocks were piled up in the entrances to the niche-chambers. All the material can be dated to the Late Period, including fragments of a wooden coffin, two red-ware



## LEGEND

- Limestone masonry — [stippled pattern]
- Mud brick — [horizontal lines pattern]
- Detritus — [dotted pattern]
- Compacted pebble stratum — [cross-hatched pattern]
- Bedrock — [solid black pattern]
- 1st Ct yard pavement level — p.l. — [dotted pattern]

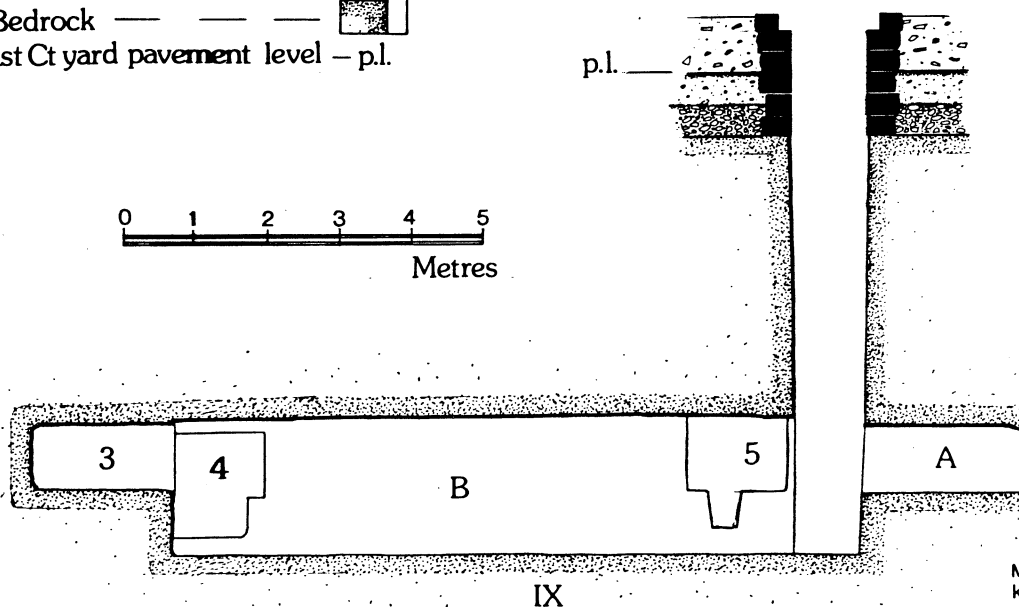
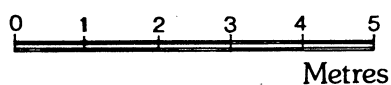


FIG. 3. Plan and section of shaft complex ix (Late Period).

torches and some very crude faience shabtis of a very late type. The architecture of this complex dates from the Old Kingdom.

Shaft vi has a depth of 6.25 m. The lip measures  $1.27 \times 0.90$  m. The upper part of the shaft is cut into the thickness of the south wall of the outer court. It is lined with mud-bricks to a depth of 1.15 m below the pavement of the court. The lower part in the bedrock dates from the Old Kingdom. The fill consisted of clean sand in which were fragments of linen mummy bandages, a fragment of a New Kingdom column panel and chippings of limestone. There are no side chambers.

Shaft complex viii. The upper part of the shaft was cut into the core of the south wing of the pylon. The sides are lined with a casing of mud-bricks taken from the pylon. The depth of the shaft is 6.75 m, measured at pavement level of the outer court. The lip of the shaft is 1.20 m wide and 0.90 m deep. There is one chamber (width 2.75 m, depth 4.60 m, height approximately 1.70 m). As regards plan and structure, as well as the rough craftsmanship, this complex is similar to shaft complex ix. The northern niche-chamber in the west side of the chamber contains a sarcophagus-shaped depression cut out in the floor. Several of its covering slabs were found still in place. A narrow niche for the emplacement of torches and other objects used at the entombment of the bodies is cut into the central part of the north side of the main chamber, approximately 1.20 m above the floor of the latter. The chamber had a fill of *tafl*, c. 0.75 m thick and covered with a layer of sand. In the *tafl* layer, heaped up against the south side of the chamber, masses of shabtis were found. These are all very crude and can be dated to the early Ptolemaic Period. They are made of faience with a dull blue glaze, which on many specimens had turned to a brownish-green hue. There are at least four different sizes, the maximum height being 8.5 cm. The total number of statuettes is 1156. Only one is inscribed, giving the name of 'The Osiris Hety-neith'. Fragments of wood found in the debris nearby may have been parts of the boxes in which the shabtis had been stored. Among the skeletal remains and fragments of mummified material several sherds were found of what could be a mummy label of terracotta. The beginning of seven or eight lines in demotic are still visible. Several holes drilled along the edges may have served for attaching the object to one of the bodies buried in the main chamber or niche-chambers. The pottery found in this complex is all from the Late Period, and includes two complete torches and fragments of several others. Parts of two limestone relief slabs, taken from the superstructure of the tomb of the Tias, were found lying loose in the sand fill. One is inscribed with an offering formula mentioning one of Tia's titles: 'The royal scribe, the great overseer of the cattle (of Amun-Re, King of the Gods)'. The complex dates from the Old Kingdom. Its heavily disturbed contents are the remains of burials which may be dated to the last centuries before the present era.

#### *The main shaft and burial complex of Ramose (fig. 4)*

The shaft which gives access to the burial chamber of Ramose was re-opened on 17 February 1990. The excavation of the substructure of the tomb was carried out during the 1990 season. The surveying of this impressive complex was carried out by Mr K. J. Frazer during the 1991 season.

The main shaft has a depth of 9.80 m. In its southern side two entrances on different levels lead to the burial complex of Ramose. On the first level, 6.85 m below the rim of the shaft, a vestibule (A) is encountered. This is linked to a lofty broad staircase hall (B) below by a rectangular opening or pit in the floor. The entrance to the staircase hall is on the same level as the bottom of the shaft. A flight of seventeen steps leads in a southward direction to a small rectangular platform from whence another flight of seven steps descends in an easterly direction towards the entrance of an antechamber (C), the floor of which is 15.83 m below the pavement of the superstructure. The dimensions of the antechamber are: width 3.15 m, depth 4 m, height 1.60 m. A second or inner shaft, cut into the floor at the east end of the antechamber, leads to the burial chamber (D). The dimensions of the inner shaft are: depth 4.50 m, length 1.65 m, width 1.30 m. The entrance to the burial chamber is in the west side of the shaft, 20.55 m below the pavement of the superstructure. The burial chamber (width 4.50 m, depth 3.40 m, height 1.90 m) seems to be unfinished. The west wall is lined with undecorated limestone slabs. The middle part of this revetment has been broken away by robbers. A number of slab fragments and lumps of *tafl*-rock were found piled up in the north-east corner of the chamber and on the bottom of the inner shaft. The other walls are dressed

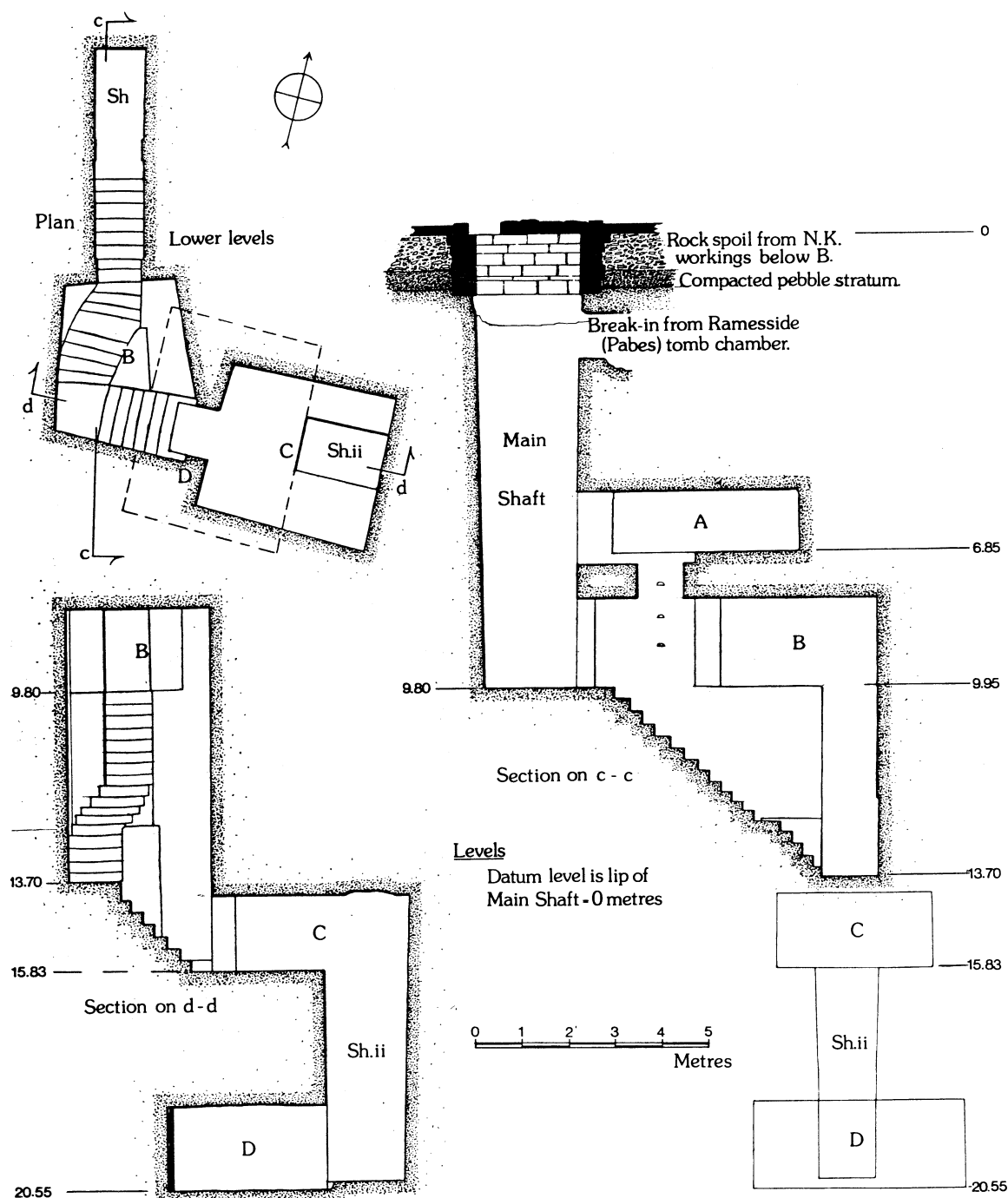


FIG. 4. Tomb of Ramose. Plan and section of main shaft and substructure with burial chamber.

and covered with a thin layer of yellowish plaster. Sherds of several large pottery jars were lying in the debris. Of Ramose's funerary equipment there were no traces left in the burial chamber itself. However, on the bottom of the inner shaft, at its rim in the antechamber, and in the staircase hall, several fragments of faience shabtis and one complete specimen were collected from the sand and *tafl* fill. The blue glaze on all the statuettes had turned purple-brown. The shabtis are inscribed with one column of black hieroglyphs on the front reading: "The *shd* Osiris, the prophet Ramose, justified (pl. III, 4: h. 10.4 cm). A small fragment of an inscribed yellow limestone canopic jar, on which the *ms*-sign of Ramose's name is still visible, was picked up in the debris on the stairs. Both vestibule and staircase hall were filled with sand mixed with strikingly large amounts of Coptic potsherds. A very small number of artifacts of the New Kingdom were detected here, such as fragments of a red terracotta slipper coffin and red terracotta shabtis, all of the Ramesside Period. Human remains were very scarce.

The large-scale, continuous plundering of all tombs in the area was once more emphasized by the finding of two relief fragments from the tomb of Horemheb in the debris on the stairs leading to Ramose's antechamber. Another remarkable example of the dislocation of objects and the shifting of debris from one tomb to another was the discovery of a Mycenaean stirrup jar sherd on the bottom of the inner shaft. This fragment was found to join a vessel which had been excavated two years previously in the tomb of Maya and Meryt.

The architecture of the substructure of the tomb of Ramose is still being studied.

### Epigraphy (G. T. Martin)

Apart from the recording of stray blocks from the tomb of the Tias, found re-used in subsidiary shafts within the Maya complex, much of the 1990 season was spent in making facsimile tracings of re-used Old Kingdom fragments, mostly deriving from the causeway of the pyramid of Unas. The corpus of material found so far was substantially increased when paving blocks in the statue-room of Maya's tomb were lifted and examined. Quite a number were found to date to the Old Kingdom.

In 1991 efforts were concentrated on the recording of the reliefs and texts in rooms K and O of the substructure of the tomb of Maya. Many of the shattered blocks were removed from these locations in 1990 to a specially built studio on the surface above for cleaning and conservation. Reliefs that were substantially intact, or which were too fragile to detach from the wall, were left *in situ*. In 1991 the blocks in the studio were reconstituted into complete scenes, and all this material, together with the reliefs and fragments remaining below, was copied in full-scale tracings.

The reliefs and inscriptions in room H, which functioned as an anteroom leading to the burial chambers, are substantially intact, and these will be dealt with in 1992. All the documentation will then be to hand to prepare the tomb of Maya and Meryt for publication.

### Inscriptions (J. van Dijk)

Careful study of the reliefs in the first decorated room (H) in the deepest level of the substructure of the tomb of Maya revealed that a number of changes had been made while the reliefs were being carved in antiquity. The most significant of these are the following:

- (1) The sceptres of the various goddesses depicted in the reliefs (Nut, Isis, Nephthys) were originally *was*-sceptres; these were subsequently changed to papyrus sceptres, obviously because these were thought to be more suitable for female deities. The original *was*-sceptre tips and ends were plastered over and recarved.

- (2) The inscriptions, mainly consisting of captions identifying the various deities shown in the reliefs, were probably carved by artists different from those who executed the figures themselves. Unlike the latter, they show a surprising number of mistakes and inaccuracies. In some cases the mistakes go back to the stage of the (black) outline drawing of the texts; in one instance in particular, the sculptor realized that the outline drawing was wrong only after he had already carved half of the text, making the resulting mixture of mistaken and correct parts of the text incomprehensible.
- (3) The wall containing the doorway which gives access to the corridor leading to the second decorated chamber (K) received a completely new decoration. Originally, the wall seems to have been designed as a single large scene showing Maya adoring the falcon-headed god Sokar who was seated on a throne under an elaborate baldaquin; behind the god stood Isis. At some stage this was altered to accommodate the doorway mentioned above; the figure of Sokar was roughly plastered over and replaced by an image of Anubis on his shrine, above which are shown the usual double *udjat*-eyes and other common lintel decorations. The original scene was only partly obliterated, which results in a curiously hybrid depiction in which, for example, the *udjat*-eyes appear to be supported by the two columns originally supporting the roof of Sokar's baldaquin. These changes tend to confirm our earlier speculation that the original plan of the tomb included a series of chambers to be cut in an easterly direction, beginning with what is now the undecorated room R; in this original plan, the first decorated room (H) was designed as a self-contained side-chamber. Only after the original plan had been abandoned, possibly because of some failure in the bedrock in room R, was H taken as the starting point of a series of chambers, necessitating the addition of a doorway to one of its walls.

In one of the shafts cut in the area east of the pylon of Maya (shaft xv), the remains of a New Kingdom burial were found. Among the objects excavated here was a large, nearly intact amphora inscribed on its shoulder with an hieratic docket in two lines (pl. III, 6). The text reads as follows: 'Year 40. Wine from the vineyard of the Temple of a Million Years of Ramessu-meryamun in the Domain of Re which is on the western side of the Water of Pre. Delivered by the chief vintner Ibager(?)'. The year 40 mentioned in the text (obviously of Ramesses II) dates the burial to the second half of the reign of that king, a date which is in agreement with the shabtis found in the same shaft.

A large decorated block from the tomb of Horemheb was found re-used as a blocking stone at the bottom of a Late Period intrusive shaft sunk into the south wall of the tomb of Maya. The block is unique in that it is the only one found so far which is decorated on both sides. It adjoins the small unplaced fragment no. [48] in the publication of G. T. Martin, *The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Commander-in-chief of Tutankhamun*, 1, 49-50 with pl. 44. It derives from the southern 'screen wall' which divided the central chapel of the tomb of Horemheb in two sections. The front (pl. II, 3) (obverse) shows Horemheb purifying an image of Osiris. Eight columns of text give part of the purification text, enumerating various names of Osiris, and the speech of the goddess Isis, who therefore must have been depicted standing behind Osiris on the adjacent block. A horizontal line of text identifies Horemheb. As in some other reliefs in the tomb, the royal uraeus was added to his forehead after he became king. The other (pl. II, 4) (reverse) side of the block

shows two offering-bearers facing right and presumably forming part of a scene showing a procession of offering-bearers on the walls of the rear part of the chapel, moving in the direction of the central stela. A *khekher*-frieze is shown on both sides of the block, but on the reverse this frieze is lower down than on the obverse, thus showing beyond doubt that the ceiling of the rear part of the central chapel was lower than that of the front part, as expected in a structure which in effect approximates to a miniature temple.

### Pottery (Barbara G. Aston)

The presence of Coptic sherds in the fill down to the very bottom of each subsidiary shaft indicates that all the secondary shaft complexes excavated in the last two seasons were open and accessible as late as the Coptic Period (or even beyond). Nevertheless, the pottery recovered from the individual chambers was in most cases primarily of one date. The chambers off shafts vii and xv yielded predominantly New Kingdom pottery, while the pottery from shaft complexes viii, ix, xi, xii, xiii, and xiv was 75–95 per cent Late Period in date. The remaining percentage consisted of weathered and fragmentary sherds from Coptic, New Kingdom and Old Kingdom times. Undoubtedly, surface debris spilled into the rooms in the shaft fill from the bottom of the shafts. Very little pottery remained in the chamber of shaft v which could have belonged to a burial deposit, but that small quantity was Late Period in date. The shaft x complex contained thoroughly mixed debris of the New Kingdom to Coptic Period.

The New Kingdom pottery from shaft xv, chamber C, is of particular interest as it includes a marl clay amphora with an hieratic inscription noting the contents to be wine from a vineyard in the Delta, dated to year 40 (see above). The six Late Period burial assemblages will provide an interesting contrast to the numerous contemporary embalmers' caches previously uncovered in shallow surface pits scattered over the entire area of the New Kingdom necropolis excavated so far by this expedition. Some of the same vessel shapes occur in both the tombs and the caches, as for example red-slipped restricted bowls and red-slipped bottles with neck ridges and 'collars'. Shaft ix (chamber B) contained the largest, most varied, and least disturbed group of Late Period pottery. The unusual and interesting vessels recovered from this chamber include a Hellenistic Red Glazed bottle, an Egyptian imitation of a Greek vessel with a spout incorporated in one of its handles, two inscribed Phoenician amphorae, and ten small marl clay jars with faces of the god Bes modelled on one side. Numerous conical 'torches' (blackened inside and often still containing charcoal) were reconstructed from the Late Period material in many of the shafts. In shaft xiv, chamber A, two torches were found leaning up against the wall just inside the doorway, while one torch from shaft ix, chamber B, was inscribed with the name *Wḥ-ib-r* (not enclosed in a cartouche). As a private name, *Wḥ-ib-r* is attested from the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty to the Ptolemaic Period, though the Late Period pottery groups found in these shafts can be dated through foreign interconnections to the fifth century BC.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Phoenician amphorae from the Saqqara tombs are of a type which occurs from the late-sixth to mid-fourth centuries BC, see A. G. Sagona, 'Levantine storage jars of the 13th to 4th century B.C.', *Opuscula Atheniensia* 14 (1982), 80–2, Type 6; P. W. Lapp, 'The pottery of Palestine in the Persian Period'. In *Archäologie und Altes Testament: Festschrift für Kurt Galling* (1970), 182–3, 'orange ware jars'. Egyptian-made Bes jars of the type with ring base, ledge rim, applied eyes, nose, mouth, ears and eyebrows, and incised moustache have been found in fifth century BC contexts in Palestine and Syria, see J. A. Blakely and F. L. Horton, Jr., 'South Palestine Bes vessels of the Persian Period', *Levant* 28 (1986), 116–18, Type IIIB; E. Stern, 'Bes vases from Palestine and Syria', *Israel Exploration Journal* 26 (1976), 184–5.

In the substructure of the tomb of Ramose, the uppermost level (chamber A) contained mixed surface debris. The pottery from chamber B and its entrance-way was approximately 95 per cent Coptic, suggesting that it derived from a Coptic dump, perhaps here in a secondary position. The pottery from the burial chamber of Ramose (chamber D) was exclusively New Kingdom in date, undoubtedly remnants of the original burial furnishings. Two Canaanite jars, one local marl clay amphora, a 'meat' jar, and three large storage jars (unusual in being of marl clay rather than silt) were among the types recorded. One sherd of a Mycenaean stirrup jar from Ramose's burial chamber joined the top of a stirrup jar found in the surface debris over the pylon of the tomb of Maya, indicating once again the disturbed nature of the contexts with which we are dealing.

### Palaeo-anthropological research, 1990 (W. R. K. Perizonius)

A four-fold programme was carried out, as follows:

#### *Excavation of human skeletal remains*

As soon as skeletal remains came to light during the excavations, the expertise of the palaeo-anthropologist was called into play to ascertain whether or not the remains were still in anatomical order, and thus undisturbed since the decomposition of the body. Some twenty-two skeletons, mainly in subsidiary shafts ix and xi, were found to be in their anatomical position, a high proportion compared to discoveries in past seasons. All these skeletons were uncovered and lifted by the palaeo-anthropologist himself, and *in situ* photographs were taken. Disturbed or mixed skeletal remains were also collected. Special 'bone concentration numbers' were introduced (see table below) instead of burial numbers, which often have to be re-adjusted later. At the end of the season all the skeletal material was transferred to shaft ix, room B, where it is stored in the sequence of bone concentration numbers to await further study.

#### *Osteological estimation of the number of individuals*

In respect of some shafts (e.g. shaft ix, exclusively of the Late Period, and shaft xv, of New Kingdom date), an attempt was made to assess the number of individuals represented by counting

TABLE I.

Bone concentration no.	Shaft	Individuals (including non-adults)	Non-adults
1, 2, 3, 3a	vii	4	1
4, 5	vi	—	—
6-38 (there are no nos. 26 or 29)	ix	36	11
39, 40, 41	x	5	2
42-5, 48, 49	xii	16	3
46, 47, 50-3, 59	xiii	13	8
54, 55, 68-74, 77-80	xiv	—	—
56, 57, 58, 60-7	xv	22	7
75, 76, 81, 83-98, 101	xi	—	—
82	i	1	—
99	v	—	—
100	iii	4	1
102	iv	—	—

the occurrence of four different skeletal parts. At the same time, a preliminary impression of the number of non-adults was obtained. Some results are presented in the table above.

#### *Dental research*

During the 1989 season, a dental investigation on 67 skeletons from the tomb-chambers of Iurudef was carried out (*Temporal and Spatial Distribution of Dental Disease in Ancient Egypt*, 1). The data were worked out later in the Netherlands. During the 1990 season most of the manuscript was written, the opportunity being taken to check certain facts against the original material.

#### *Skeletal remains from the substructure of Maya's tomb*

The identification of bone fragments from the tomb-chambers of Maya and Meryt (rooms K and O) was continued.

### **Palaeo-anthropological research, 1991 (E. Strouhal)**

The priorities this season were as follows:

#### *Tomb of Maya and Meryt, original burials*

Several hundred fragments of bones, mostly very small, were found completely broken and scattered throughout the lower level of shaft i. Since there was no later intrusive archaeological material excavated at that level, everything found is regarded as contemporary, dating to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The bones were dispersed not only in the two burial chambers but also in adjoining rooms and corridors. Thus the minimum number of buried individuals was determined taking the material as a whole, irrespective of find-spot.

After distinguishing human from animal bones (the latter representing burial offerings), the anatomical method was used, based on the identification of characteristic skeletal features. The number of adult individuals did not surpass four, in respect of any of the features examined. The remains of an 11–13 year old child were easily differentiated from the fragments representing adults. According to secondary sexual features, as well as size and robusticity of the fragments, two adult males and two adult females were identified. One of the males was more robustly built than the other. Concerning their age, only some slight indications were present, suggesting maturity for both males. While one of the females appears to have been a young adult, the other was mature to senile. A more precise age determination will be attempted later by using the histomorphometric method. The determination of the blood groups will aim at checking the correctness of the results.

We may tentatively conclude that these remains represent with great probability Maya, owner of the tomb, Meryt his wife, and his stepmother Henutiunu. The identification of the second male is more problematic. A possible candidate is Maya's younger brother Nahuher, who was no doubt responsible for Maya's burial arrangements. The child was most probably that of Maya and Meryt. Identification of these persons appears easier in respect of the two females. More than half of the identified fragments of the older one were found in the innermost burial chamber O, which, supposing Henutiunu to have died first, would have been hers. About half of the identified fragments of the young female came from the second and better decorated chamber K, where Meryt could have been placed together with her husband. Which of the two males was Maya is not possible to determine until a more exact age is arrived at, because about one-third of the bone fragments of *each* male were found in burial chamber K. Almost half the child's skeletal fragments came from the unfinished burial chamber R.

#### *Burials in the superstructure*

Five wholly or partially preserved secondary burials were excavated in the forecourt, the first courtyard, and the east part of chapel A (originally called the south magazine). Two of the burials are dated to the Twenty-first to Twenty-second Dynasty, the other three are undated. They consist of a 35–45 year old female, a 12–13 year old child, a 40–50 year old female, a 30–40 year

old male, and a 35-45 year old female. The first three were mummified using resin, but their brains were not removed. The other two did not show any traces of resin or brain removal. Pathological changes were absent, except in dentition.

#### *Bone deposits in caches*

In three different locations in the tomb greatly disturbed deposits of partly well-preserved, partly broken human bones without any anatomical continuity were discovered. Chapel D contained cache no. 1, chapel A cache no. 2, and the rooms, corridors and niches of the upper level of shaft i cache no. 3. These caches were deposited at different times from the late New Kingdom to the Late Period.

These bones could only be studied by the anatomical method, without the possibility of reconstructing individuals. The aims of the study were the determination of the number of buried individuals, the discrimination of immatures and adults, the distinction of sexes in adults and the observation of pathological changes. The minimum number of individuals was determined according to the bone most often encountered (in pair bones taking left and right bones separately), the maximum number by matching pair bones of the same individuals and adding unmatched bones of the two sides to them.

In cache no. 1, the minimum number of individuals was 24 (8 adult males, 7 adult females, 9 immatures), their maximum number 35 (14 adult males, 12 adult females, 9 immatures). In cache no. 2, at a minimum 18 individuals (10 males, 5 females, 3 immatures), at a maximum 21 individuals (11 males, 7 females, 3 immatures) were represented. Cache no. 3 consisted of the remains of a minimum of 84 people (44 males, 23 females, 17 immatures), a maximum of 106 people (53 males, 33 females, and 20 immatures).

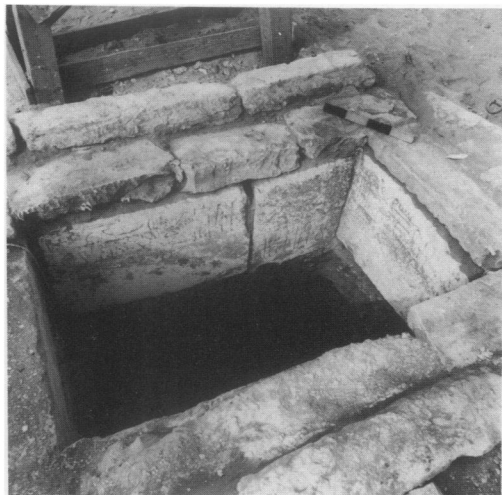
The demographic composition of the individual caches does not reflect the conditions of natural populations because of the excess of males over females and adults over immatures. This finding can be only partially explained by the differential resistance of bones of males, females and immatures. We may suppose that the cemetery from which these cached bones came was used for males and adults preferentially.

About half of the individuals from cache no. 1 were mummified using resin, and three-quarters of eight extant skulls showed evidence of brain removal. Material from cache no. 2 mostly bore no traces of resin, and in no skulls were signs of brain removal found. By contrast, the majority of bones from cache no. 3 preserved remnants of resinous patches, and three-quarters of fifty-five extant skulls bore features of excerebration. According to these findings, we may conclude that in caches nos. 1 and 3 members of a well-to-do social stratum were deposited, while in cache no. 2 the remains belonged to common people.

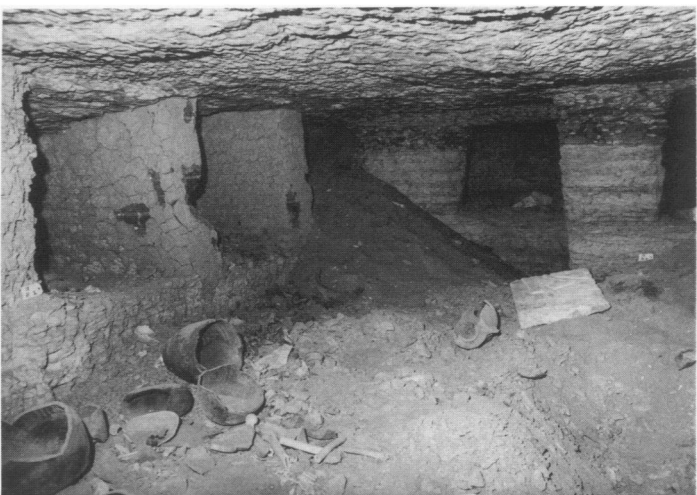
A striking feature of the three deposits was the paucity of pathological changes. A few traumas, osteomas, cribra orbitalia, congenital changes and dental pathology only were noted.

#### *Palaeopathological cases from the tomb of Iurudef*

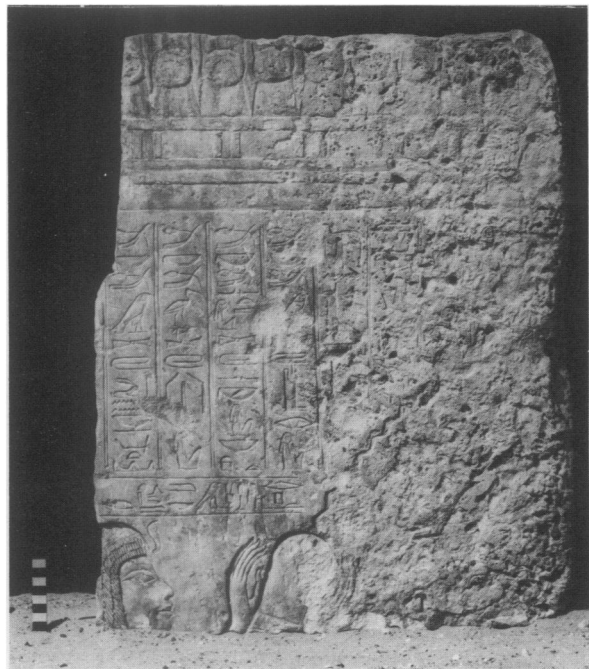
From the human remains excavated in the tomb-shaft of Iurudef, and partially studied previously, eight cases with uncommon palaeopathological findings were re-examined from the medical point of view, using X-rays and, where necessary, histology. They comprised cases of generalized periostitis, a malignant and a benign tumour, an arteriosclerosis, Pott's disease (vertebral tuberculosis), two complicated traumas, and erosive foci on the cranial convexity of an infant whose diagnosis has not yet been concluded.



1. Rim of Shaft complex vii, showing re-used inscribed blocks from the tomb of Maya and Meryt (p. 8)



2. Shaft complex ix. Interior of main burial chamber (p. 12)



3. Relief block from the tomb of Horemheb (p. 17)



4. Reverse of 3 (p. 17)

THE TOMB OF MAYA AND MERYT



1. Shabti of Inenay  
(p. 11)



2. Shabti of Neferabu  
(p. 11)



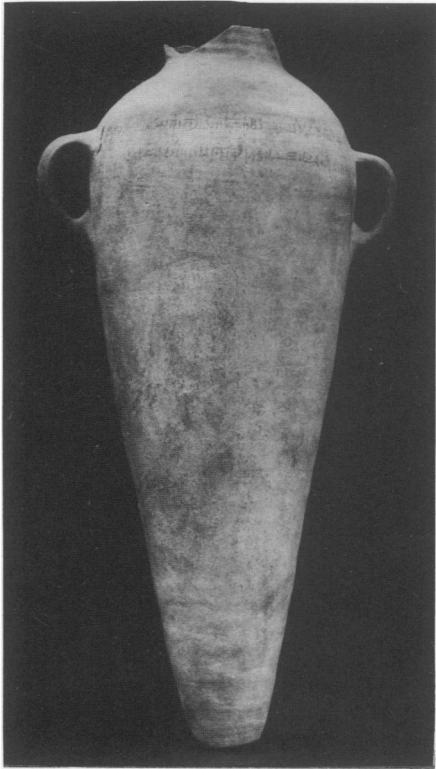
3. Shabti of Huy  
(p. 11)



4. Shabti of Ramose  
(p. 16)



5. Shabtis of Hetepbastet (p. 12)



6. Wine amphora with docket of  
year 40 (p. 17)

THE TOMB OF MAYA AND MERYT